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AUTHOR Odland, Norine
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ABSTRACT

Three questions guided the preparation of this paper: What are current practices in teaching literature in the elementary school? What research supports these practices? and What research should be conducted to increase knowledge and improve current practices? The first section, "Current Practices," describes the historical background of the teaching of literature in the elementary school, representative curriculum guides and media programs, materials for the literature curriculum, and materials for teacher education. The second section, "Research in Children's Literature," reviews research dealing with children's interests and tastes, content analyses of children's literature, children's responses to literature, and practices in teaching literature. Following each of the proceeding sections is a summary which includes implications for the further study of teaching literature in the elementary school. A final section generalizes about the state of the art of teaching literature in the elementary school and makes recommendations for teaching practices. (GW)

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Teaching Literature in the Elementary School

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Norine Odland

University of Minnesota

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INTRODUCTION

Literature is usually considered to be an essential part of the elementary school curriculum. But, beyond general agreement that children should have the opportunity to read and to learn about literature, there is considerable variance in practices and recommendations about goals, content, methodology, and evaluation procedures for literature. Indeed, even the definition of terms is an invitation to ambiguity. In some instances literature is assumed to be part of the reading program or a part of some other language arts curriculum while others use the term to denote a specific subject in much the way it is defined in college curricula.

The expression "teaching literature" is used relatively infrequently and usually is associated with a special period of the day with a special label in the same way teachers refer to teaching science in the science period or to teaching any other subject in the time designated for it. The broader, more general interpretations of literature in the elementary school expand into use of terms such as language, language arts, personal reading, reading, individualized reading, interests and tastes, reading guidance, sustained silent reading, literature readers, appreciation, and variations of each of these. Direct attention to literature is most often indicated in either reading or language arts areas of the curriculum, but examination of other curricular areas reveals that the reference to and use of literature is recognized in many areas of the elementary school curriculum if reading and studying books other than textbooks can be interpreted as literature.

Examination of the state of the art of teaching literature in the elementary school must be done with recognition of the problem of definition and recognition of great variety in theory and in practice. Expectations for

discovery of the way it is being done are not realistic; however, it is possible to describe various practices as reflected by publications in the field. Included in the review are materials for children and for teachers. Research in children's literature adds new knowledge to the field and offers evidence upon which practices may be based. Furthermore, research reflects the areas which have been judged worthy of scholarly study. Major emphasis will be given to recent and current practices and research but historical review will be included, especially when the historical view adds depth to understanding the current state of affairs in teaching literature in the elementary school.

Using a broad and general interpretation of literature and its place in the elementary school, an attempt has been made to illustrate the influences affecting the teaching of literature by reviewing the following:

Historical Perspective

Curriculum Guides and Media Programs

Materials for Children

Materials for Teacher Education

Following the description of current practices, contributions to research in the teaching of literature in the elementary school have been reviewed. Again, limits of the paper preclude anything but reviews to illustrate types of contributions and as such cannot be considered a comprehensive survey of research. The review of research includes studies and reports dealing with:

Children's Interests and Tastes

Content Analysis of Children's Literature

Children's Responses to Literature

Practices in Teaching Literature

Under both Current Practices and Research the reviews have been grouped so that sources can be identified easily. Following each of the two major sections is a summary and, combined with the summary, implications for continued and further study about the teaching of literature in the elementary school. In the last section of the paper, the writer has attempted to make conclusions and recommendations about teaching literature in the elementary school.

Three questions have guided the entire presentation: What are current practices in teaching literature in the elementary school? What study has been pursued in order to support practices in teaching literature? What study should be pursued in order to improve practices and increase knowledge about teaching literature in the elementary school?

CURRENT PRACTICES

Historical Perspective

Historically, teaching of literature in the elementary school has been closely related to teaching of reading. Texts for teaching reading were often referred to as "Literature Readers" or "Literary Readers." The selections were excerpts from great works and relatively large amounts of poetry were included. Teaching procedures focused on comprehending the meanings of the selections and on phonetic analysis of words from the selections, prose or poetry. Moralistic and didactic selections were commonly chosen for each of the levels of early readers.

One of the earliest and most popular readers in early American education was compiled by Noah Webster and circulated widely between 1785 and 1830. In this reader, An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking, the focus was on stories and essays which contained moral teachings considered appropriate

to the education of children.[1] In 1799 the first American edition of Lindley Murray's English Reader appeared and became the most popular reading text in the United States until McGuffey's texts appeared. Among the prose selections in the English Readers were writings from Hume, Addison, Goldsmith, and Samuel Johnson.[2] During the nineteenth century, compilers of readers for older children recognized literature as an essential feature of textbook content.[3] About 1850 there began to be efforts made to consider children's interests in selection of content for readers. Loomis Campbell, in compiling the New Franklin Fifth Reader, states that he used the following criteria in selecting material: "Is the selection of interest to the child who will use this book?"[4] The compilers of Stepping Stones to Literature stated their purpose to be to "inculcate a fondness for literature in its completeness and a taste for reading good books." Their choices included selections from Grimm Brothers, Eugene Field, Longfellow, Stevenson, Jane Taylor, and Clement Moore.[5]

Changes in organizational patterns in elementary education have had an impact on practices of teaching literature. With the advent of the junior high school, some shift of emphasis on literature moved out of the elementary school curriculum. Increase in numbers of school libraries is another development which, viewed historically, seems to have been accompanied by a shift in responsibility for children's personal reading. The Sputnik era with great emphasis on science and technology can now be seen, a generation later, to have given those who chose to do so the reasons for curriculum changes in which literature received lessened emphasis.

Curriculum changes in junior and senior high school and in colleges in the late sixties and in the seventies have been characterized by increased

electives for students, especially in literature programs. It is not unusual today to find juniors and seniors in college who have not studied literature at any time throughout their education. The impact of the change in high school and college literature curricula on elementary school practices cannot be assessed because of its recency but speculation can be made that concern about what is happening in teaching literature is a crucial question not only at the level of the elementary school but occurs with urgency today at all levels of education, junior high school, senior high school, and college.

Curriculum Guides and Media Programs

Guides for curriculum and school media programs are indicators of purposes and intents related to teaching literature in classrooms in elementary schools. Rather than separating the two planning units, i.e., curriculum and media, the two are combined for review because genuine achievement of purposes of one depends on complementary participation from the other.

Most of the curriculum guides which refer to teaching literature do so in combination with one or several of the language arts. Furthermore, the guides are often designed to cover the range from kindergarten to grade twelve. As a result, there are few curriculum guides which deal only with literature in the elementary school.

Illustrative materials from school system curriculum guides were reviewed by ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. The purpose for the reviews was to provide models to study in the process of planning curricula although parts of the guides can be used directly in the classroom. Attention is given to literature in several sections: philosophy,

objectives, language, media, and evaluation. Literature is addressed directly in the section entitled "Reading and Literature." The review is organized and specific and includes objectives, resources, and teaching strategies for kindergarten through grade twelve.[6]

Curriculum projects undertaken during the decade of the sixties are reviewed by Rice. A brief description of programs designed for improving literature curricula appears in Chapter 3, "New Developments in Literature Curricula and Their Teaching." Few of the programs reviewed include work in elementary schools. Among the few is the Nebraska Curriculum Development Center where composition was considered in relationship to literature and language and the literature component for grades one through six was designed to acquaint students with literary form. One section of Chapter 6 reviews recent developments related to the teacher of English and Media Resources.[7]

The State of Nebraska, Department of Education, published "A Guide for the Language Arts in the Elementary School." The guide treats the philosophical reasonings for integrating the language arts. The first part of the guide presents materials from children's literature; in the second part of the guide is an outline for teaching all other phases of language arts using the stories and poems from the first part of the guide. The methods currently available for evaluating and testing literature and other areas of language arts were considered to lack validity. One page of 108 pages deals with evaluation and there is a recommendation that new methods for evaluation should be devised, those with attention to basic understandings rather than tests of facts and details.[8]

Language and Communications is the curriculum guide published by the State Department of Education of the State of Minnesota. The guide uses the term "literature" to refer to both print and non-print materials. The examples given about teaching literature are mainly based in secondary school settings. The authors state that they are uncertain about the need for teaching literature for the purpose of pure enjoyment. The guide refers to censorship briefly by recognizing that freedom to read is important.[9]

Media programs for schools are dealt with in all aspects in a publication by the American Library Association and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. Among the topics considered are Program Patterns and Relationships, Personnel, Operation of the Media Program, Collections, and Facilities. The purpose of the facilities is stated as being to undergird and extend educational opportunities by providing the resources for teaching and learning. The base collection of resources is recommended to be at least 20,000 items or 40 items per user. Of that total, the recommendation is that there be from 8000 to 12,000 books with 16 to 24 volumes per user. The major emphasis in the guide is on access and delivery systems in order to carry out the primary purpose of meeting the educational goals and objectives which it has helped establish.[10]

Materials for Children

Textbooks and other materials for children are available for teaching literature in the elementary school. Textbooks in reading and language arts are commonly considered to provide basic instruction in literature and examples from those materials will be reviewed. Periodicals for children are potentially useful for introducing children to literature and selected

publications will be considered. The vast rich range of children's trade books available today should be recognized when discussing materials for students in the elementary school. Because of limits of this paper, only brief and general treatment can be given to the materials which are the content of the literature curriculum.

In one reading series which has twenty levels, Level 18, Standing Strong, guides the user to study "Literature and the Writer's Craft." Other skill development is a part of the overall goals but the objectives in the section about literature are comprehensive. All types of writing are included in the study of the writer's craft as well as a study of various types of literary devices.[11]

In Lavender Skywriters, a part of Keys to Reading series, stories and poems are used for developing specific reading skills. The three skeletal objectives which are used throughout the text are word perception, comprehension, and content. Specifically, a word perception objective would direct the learner to review and practice syllable division and to understand alliteration. Comprehension objectives include activities such as observing important details, making judgments about characters, and evaluating a story and using illustrations. An objective related to content guides the student to identify the conflict and climax in the plot of a realistic story. The guide for the series stresses meaningful reading with one purpose being that of creating good reading habits and skills that will transfer to the reading of other materials. Questions which follow stories emphasize reactions and critical interpretations of reading. Fiction, exposition, and poetry are included in order to teach the reader to read differently for different styles of writing. No specific

mention is made of incorporating a literature program into the reading program. Selections do not include well-known authors although some fables and tales have been rewritten for the text. One poem is included in each unit but poetry is not studied as a genre.[12]

In the Teacher's Guides for books Three to Six for the Palo Alto Reading Program the contents are outlined and a sequence of words and sounds is presented. The emphasis is on the relation between sound and symbol in language. It is assumed that there are reading experiences beyond those which are provided in the basal program. It is also suggested that the teacher should use part of the reading time to read to children. No direct reference is made to teaching literature.[13]

The textbook, Images, is a part of a series for which two basic goals are stated: (1) development of an ever-increasing control of specific skills, (2) development of an enthusiastic and ever-broadening interest in reading. Skills to be taught include decoding skills, comprehension skills, reference and study skills and literary skills. The comprehension skills include a look at literal comprehension, interpretive thinking and evaluative and creative thinking. Teachers and students are provided with annotated lists of library books suggested for additional reading.[14]

The Teacher's Edition for Whispering Ghosts (level 9) contains a statement of goals for an entire reading program. Little is mentioned about the importance of literature or its relationship to the series. Among the broad goals are appreciating imagery and gaining self-confidence in independent reading. The program includes stories, folktales, fables, myths, fantasies, and poems along with other types of writing. No specific directions about literature are included in the guidelines for teachers.[15]

The introduction to Magic Rings and Funny Things makes a strong commitment to include literature in the reading program. It is stated that literary quality is reflected in the selections used in the program. The text for children is made up of a compilation of six separate stories, each divided into chapters. The stories have been written especially for the text. New vocabulary is listed at the beginnings of the chapters. Included in the guide for teachers is a list of supplementary resources including a list of books from children's literature.[16]

Two major goals of the reading program proposed by the authors of Bridges and other books in a series are to help children learn to read, and to communicate to children the rewards of reading. A multi-sensory and multi-media approach is used. Skills related to literature are those of critical reading and literary skills dealing with form and elements of style. Attitudes and habits are mentioned in objectives for appreciating and selecting well-written materials. The bibliography of reference books and periodicals will lead the teacher to literature, but children's literature is not a major direct emphasis in the text. More study about authors and artists is included in the upper levels of the series where the purposes for reading instruction include practice of skills which have been learned.[17]

Textbooks for language study often include objectives and material related to the teaching of literature. In some, the emphasis on literature is concentrated in one or two units, in others the content throughout the text is related to literature. In the World of Language (Book 5) there is material from literature in each of the chapters where the goals are development of objectives of Communication, Language Skills, Cognitive Development, Human

Relations, and Literature. In chapter five, "The Library," skills in library use are presented and, in chapter nine, prose and poetry selections are used as examples for a section entitled "As Writers See It."[18]

The Teacher's Edition for Language and How to Use It includes a section dealing with the role of literature in language development. Throughout the series, literature is used as a model for creative writing. Literature is related to children's language development through ways in which literature increases children's vocabularies, develops sensitivity to language, provides a model for writing skills, and serves as a springboard for creative activities.[19]

There are nine strands of language learning outlined for the users of Patterns of Language and one of the strands is literature. The authors of the teacher's guide explain that literature was selected to be appropriate to the learning experience at hand. For the literature strand, selections of prose and poetry are listed along with the skills or related learning which can be expected to be achieved with the selections.[20]

General goals for prose literature and composition are stated in the language text Communicating. Specific instructional objectives for levels one through six are cumulative. Some objectives relate to poetry and prose but the majority of the objectives relate to phases of language learning other than literature. The authors of the text express the belief that literature is a part of the communicating process and as such is an appropriate medium for use in developing communication skills.[21]

Periodicals for children deal with literature in a variety of ways but none can be identified as having a direct and specific purpose of teaching literature. There are periodicals regularly published which cover current

events and topics of special interest. Book clubs are available to children through systematic announcements made in periodicals. Children are attracted to read about topics of current interest in magazines and newspapers in media centers where it can be expected there will be between 50 to 175 titles of newspapers and magazines if the recommendations for School Media Programs are followed. A magazine, published nine months annually, in which literature is the major content is Cricket.[22] Poetry and prose selections, either complete or excerpts, cover a range of interests and types of literature. Illustrations from original works are reproduced in black and white. Issues often include a "Meet Your Author" article, a column of correspondence from readers, and a crafts column. Quality of the content is a conscious concern of the editors of the magazine whose intent it is to introduce children to authors and to books which they may seek out to read in their entirety. Teachers of literature recognize the value of periodicals which motivate children to read regularly.

Among other periodicals for children there are several which are focused toward certain audiences, not a general audience. Topics of special interest such as nature or crafts are featured in some publications. Others identify certain age groups as the readers for whom the content is intended. Most magazines for children relate more directly to reading non-fiction than to reading fiction.

Children's trade books should be recognized in a review of materials for children who are learning about literature. There is no specific instruction about method for these books such as that found in a textbook but reading the individual book is really the goal in teaching literature. A recent significant development in children's books is an increase in the number of fine children's books published in paperback. Along with the increase in number is improved quality in illustration, and in paper and print. Multiple copies of selected titles are recommended for teaching literature in the elementary school and the increased availability of paperbacks makes the recommendation more easily implemented.

Materials for Teacher Education

There are many materials to which teachers, pre-service or in-service, could have access in order to read about teaching literature. For this review, selected items have been drawn from textbooks, periodicals, and books which relate to literature in a way such that the reader could gain insights and understandings to enhance the teacher's background for teaching literature. From a limited number of periodicals, articles have been reviewed for two major purposes, to provide a sample of the type of article found in the journal and to review the point of view of the individuals who wrote the article or conducted the research.

Petty, Petty and Becking deal with all phases of Language Arts in a text which is divided into six parts with one part dealing specifically with literature. Part Five, Reading Literature and Study Skills includes 5 chapters. One chapter (15) is entitled "Children's Literature in the School Program" and in that chapter can be found a brief summary of plans for a literature program

using an evaluation of outcomes as a base for planning a literature program. There is also a chapter on learning to use the library.[23]

In the textbook of readings for in-service classroom teachers edited by Rudell, et al., one chapter pertains especially to children's literature. In the chapter, "Reading Program Gains Purpose Through Literature," are essays by Leland Jacobs, Louise M. Rosenblatt, Charlotte Huck, and Alan Dundes. There is a recommendation that a study of children's literature be a part of the professional development of school personnel.[24]

Tiedt and Tiedt report that literature has always been an integral part of the English program in the junior high school, high school, and college, but in the elementary school literature is incidental. This condition calls for a planned program in literature. Suggestions are made for activities including better book reviewing, presenting a book to a class, and focusing attention on books. Literature is considered not only a part of the English program but also a means for enriching learning in other subjects.[25]

A group of paperbacks under the general title, Literature for Children, consists of several short books each dealing with a different aspect of children's literature. Each book treats the subject matter of the title, e.g. Storytelling and Creative Drama.

There is some reference to content and to method in each book according to the topic and to the emphasis on method which the author chose to make in the book. Unless the reader takes into account all seven topics, the impact on teaching could lack balance. On the other hand, any one of the books could supplement other texts or curriculum guides which give less attention to certain phases of children's literature. The theories put forth in the texts will serve the classroom teacher better than will the bibliographies which are limited and, as with most bibliographies, tend to be out of date the day they are published.[26]

Huck, in Children's Literature in the Elementary School, covers both content and method with more space to the former than to the latter. Part III, "Developing a Literature Program" is made up of three chapters, "Creating the Learning Environment," "Extending Literature Through Creative Activities" and "The Literature Program." In the latter chapter Huck outlines ideas about planning a literature program. The recommendation is that each faculty needs to develop a literature program based upon their knowledge of the values of literature for children, the needs and characteristics of children, knowledge

of the learning process, and a thorough understanding of literature. The major emphasis in the elementary school should be on "discussing delight in books and on interpreting literature." Teachers should not treat literature as a content subject to be taught but each faculty should be free to plan their own literature program. Some guidance for the individuals planning the curriculum in literature can be derived from the topics which are considered significant when evaluating a literature program:

1. Availability of books and other media
2. Time for literature
3. Stimulating interest
4. Balances in the curriculum
5. Evaluating growth of children
6. Evaluating professional growth of teachers.[27]

The book, An Introduction to Children's Literature, is intended to be a survey of the content of children's literature. There is a short section dealing with literature in the classroom in which the author states that literature is an important part of the elementary school curriculum and not just something to do when work is finished. Lickteig considers the teacher the crucial factor in planning and implementing a good literature program. The material in the text would provide a breadth of titles from which to begin to plan content of a literature program.[28]

A book about children's literature and the way in which it might be presented to children is one by Lonsdale and Mackintosh. Among the four audiences for which the book is intended is that of the educators who are involved in curriculum development in children's literature. The first three

chapters of the book are specifically focused on the teacher's role in children's experiences with literature. The major part of the text is a discussion of values of literature and types of literature. The last chapter proposes ideas about organizing and evaluating a literature program. Brief mention is made about advantages and disadvantages of a structured program for teaching literature. Techniques recommended for evaluating a literature program could be used by classroom teachers.[29]

A special area of teaching literature is the topic for the book Storyteller. The text covers more than traditional storytelling by including the experience story, choral reading, flannel board stories, storytelling with puppets, singing and the dance, and reading aloud. Each chapter is organized in the style of a manual with examples for practicing the activities recommended. There are no direct references to teaching literature or to curriculum organization but the book could be a resource for teachers who are seeking help with the activities treated in the text.[30]

In the introduction for Literature for Thursday's Child, Sebesta and Iverson state in the preface that the work is intended as a liaison between books and children as you develop your own program of children's literature. The book is organized to be used as a text and speaks to students in general. There are questions and activities at the ends of the chapters. The major part of the text is content of children's literature, exploring it and telling how to deal with it. The entire text is a combination of expert opinion and information about children's literature.[31]

Social issues are the major focus in a book by Rudman. Each chapter deals with an issue, e.g. Sex, The Black, Divorce, War, Death, and Old Age.

The emphasis is on the content of the children's books which are discussed, especially the reasons the content should be taught to children. An extensive bibliography accompanies each chapter along with questions and exercises for adults which are intended for pre-service or in-service teacher education.[32]

Introductions by Leland Jacobs and Northrop Frye set the tone for a text in which Sloan proposes teaching literature for its own sake. The author builds a strong case for combining the language arts rather than separating them and explains that literature cannot really be taught, but that teaching knowledge of what literature is and how it works can be taught. It is on that premise that Sloan calls for an approach to literature for children based on literary criticism. The major part of the text is an expansion of the approach through examples with more specific works from poetry than from prose. It is a challenge to teachers to attend more to the way literature works. Sloan believes that study of literature should begin in kindergarten and continue through graduate school.[33]

In a book by Smith and Park the contents are divided into four major sections. Introduction to Books and Children includes discussion of general philosophy and understanding of children and literature. In Part II, "People Who Create Children's Literature," classical and modern authors and illustrators are presented. Poetry is examined in a separate chapter. Part III, "Adventures with Literature," outlines methods for presenting literature to children. The School Library and the Book Fair are described. Resources for the Classroom Teacher are the major content in Part IV of the text. The sub-title for the book, "Children's Literature Methods" indicates that the authors intend for the book to be used for teacher education.[34]

In the preface for Children and Books the authors explain that the audience for the book is classes in Children's Literature in English and Education Departments and in Library Schools in Colleges and Universities. Emphasis is on selection accomplished by thorough coverage of types of literature with short excerpts and illustrations from some of the selections. One part of the text, four chapters, is entitled "Bringing Children and Books Together." In those chapters patterns of response are described followed by suggestions for encouraging children to respond to literature. There is reference to methods for working with children and literature but no direct reference is made to curriculum organization. The final section of the book treats eight topics and issues related to children's literature: Research in Children's Literature, Censorship, Television; Sexism; Pressure for Pluralism; Internationalism; Popular Literature; Children's Access to Materials. Compared with earlier editions of the book, there is more material about teaching literature but the entire text continues to place major focus on content more than on method.[35]

There are many books available which deal with specific topics or concerns in the field of children's literature. These are books which would enrich and expand the background of knowledge and understanding of the teacher of literature beyond the more general coverage of publications which propose, at least to some extent, to be used as textbooks for teacher education. A sample of those related materials will be reviewed.

The teacher who looks for information about picturebooks will find a rich resource in American Picturebooks from Noah's Ark to the Beast Within. The text can be read and enjoyed from beginning to end but it can also be used

as a reference book for specific artists about whose work a teacher is seeking information. The author's critical reviewing is basis for content when teaching about illustration and picturebooks throughout the elementary school grades. Processes of illustration are discussed with examples reproduced, many in color.[36]

The central focus of a book by Stewig is children's writing but the approach to writing is through a program based on literature. The recommendation is made for a planned program of literature and wide reading before making writing assignments based on literature. The major part of the book is detailed plans for accomplishing writing based on literature. The teaching theories and methods proposed could be a complement to a good literature program.[37]

A collection of articles about controversies in children's literature is found in the book, Suitable for Children. The articles have appeared in other publications and all deal with what the editor believes is controversy: Fairy Stories; Comics; Children's Books and Fear; Children's Classics and Controversies; Value of Children's Literature. The writers whose articles are included are predominantly British. For each topic, two points of view, usually opposing points of view, are included. The contents would provide stimulating material for discussion about children's literature.[38]

In a book of essays by Townsend, the reader will be introduced to nineteen English-language writers for children who are from England, Australia, and the United States. Most attention has been given to the literary style of each of the writers along with a short biographical sketch of each person. Teachers of older children (10 and up) would use this material in planning curriculum which includes study of literary styles and creators of children's

literature.[39] In another collection of essays, a distinguished writer of books for children builds a strong defense for literature which stimulates the imagination. Cameron refers to many children's books as she discusses literature and in that content a teacher can find valuable guides to children's books appropriate for a variety of curriculum topics. Also valuable to a teacher is the inspiration, the motivation, the reasons to work with children and literature, for Cameron is convincing in her belief that there is good reason to teach literature.[40]

Haviland is the editor for a selection of essays dealing with criticism and trends in children's books. An historical perspective can be viewed in the collection which begins with writings before the twentieth century, including Sarah Trimmer and her ideas about choosing materials for children under the age of twelve. Articles are included which deal with illustration, classics, international scene, awards, and writers and writing. Teachers can find a wealth of information in the collection and for some the book could be a motivation to read more about a topic or other books by an author.[41]

A respected writer for young people expresses her opinions about writing for children in a collection of essays addressed to critics, editors, publishers, parents, teachers, librarians. Contemporary issues are dealt with directly, especially the prevading didactic tone and the emphasis on the sordid and unpleasant in life. The teacher who seeks to be informed about book selection will find much that is stimulating in Hunter's ideas about what it takes to write for children.[42]

Periodicals are a way for teachers to be informed about a wide range of topics and events related to children's literature. Some publications review

new books as the only purpose, others combine book reviews with articles about content or method for teaching or working with children in other ways. A sample of publications will be reviewed. For those in which there is a major focus on teaching literature, articles will be reviewed for a dual purpose, to illustrate the type of articles found in the journal and to draw attention to points of view about teaching literature.

There is a variety of resource material for teachers in The Calendar, a publication of the Children's Book Council. Articles about books and authors, and references to issues are timely. Bibliographies for special events and lists of free and inexpensive materials available from a variety of sources are ways in which teachers can keep up-to-date with new and exciting ideas. Information about Children's Book Week materials and events is a regular item published in the Calendar.[43]

A publication which has as its only purpose reviews of new books for children is the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books. The annotations refer to literary elements as well as to content though the latter often dominates. The prediction of readers for which the book will be appropriate is expressed in grade levels. Teachers who participate in book selection and curriculum planning activities find the publication useful.[44]

The Horn Book Magazine publishes articles about children's books and also extensive reviews of new books. There is no specific audience intended beyond persons with an interest in children's books. The editorial, one page in length, is usually a concise statement of opinion about a current concern in the field of children's books. For example, Editor Heins called readers' attention to current attempts to select and teach books for the purpose of

developing values adults perceive to be in the literature. In the article, Heins speculates that recommendations for didactic use of books is more likely to be accepted by teachers than by librarians.[45] An article by Myra Cohn Livingston, "But, Is It Poetry" was published by Horn Book Magazine in two parts. In the two articles Livingston deals with teaching poetry and most specifically with children's writing poetry. She takes a strong stand for allowing children to learn about poetry without setting for them the goal of publication as the measure of accomplishment.[46] An article by Chambers expresses that British writer's interpretation of the Bullock Report especially as it relates to teaching literature in the schools. Chambers decries the fact that "despite the lip-service paid to the unique importance of literacy, most people involved in education, including a great many teachers, do not actually believe in the importance of literature.... Meanwhile, ever more investigations, including Bullock's confirm again and again that nonreading children are made by nonreading adults."[47]

The periodical, Children's Literature in Education, has an editorial board with members from the United States and the United Kingdom. The publication usually contains five or six long articles by writers or critics of children's literature.[48] Many of the writers treat their subjects from the point of view of the classroom teacher. The articles tend to report philosophical beliefs, opinions and content analysis rather than experimental research. Phaedrus is a relatively new journal which uses the sub-title "A Journal of Children's Literature Research." The content of the magazine is predominately historical with articles and other reports from many countries. The bibliography is a potentially useful section especially in the area of

international emphasis.[49] Teachers and curriculum consultants could find ideas for discussion and consideration from these publications.

A stated purpose of the Council on Interracial Books for Children is to promote anti-racial and anti-sexist literature and instructional materials for children. The Interracial Books for Children Bulletin carries out the objectives through editorials, book reviews, and articles. The concern is mainly about content rather than about literary style. Children's books are considered a significant avenue for influencing children.[50]

The School Library Journal covers issues and concerns related to children, young adults, and libraries both school and public. New books are reviewed with brief annotations. In recent years the journal has provided a lively forum for discussions about censorship. The content of the magazine is not intended to focus directly on teaching literature but it is a source of information about books and issues central to other resources for teaching literature.[51]

One of the publications of the International Reading Association, The Reading Teacher, deals with reading instruction in the elementary school. Reports of research along with other topics of interest to the teacher of literature can be found in the magazine. Children's books are reviewed, usually from the point of view of the classroom teacher and professional books about reading and literature are also reviewed.[52]

One publication of the National Council of Teachers of English with contents pertaining to teaching literature is Research in the Teaching of English. The articles vary in length but tend to be detailed and complete. The publication reports research directly and also reviews reports of research

in all fields of English Education including literature. Implications for classroom teaching can be drawn from the studies which are reported. Interest in this magazine will be greatest among those classroom teachers who are actively pursuing methods based on research findings or who are conducting their own research.[53] In one issue of Research in the Teaching of English the report of the National Assessment of Literature was reviewed by Grindstaff and Muller. The reviewers go beyond summarizing the findings to making critical judgments about the methods used and to interpreting findings as the findings might influence teaching.[54]

Another publication of the National Council of Teachers of English is Language Arts formerly Elementary English. Children's literature is emphasized as a part of the language arts curriculum in elementary schools. More is published about the content of children's books than about teaching literature. Certain issues of the magazine have more space given to literature than others but currently each issue deals with some aspect of literature because there is a regular column of reviews of children's books. Occasionally the NCTE convention and conference speeches which focus on literature are published. A broad range of approaches in topic and point of view can be found in Language Arts.[55]

Opinions of specialists in the field of children's literature have been published in Elementary English, and now in Language Arts. According to Loban, the area of elementary language arts need not include literature as the secondary English area does. He observes that "the inclusion of literature in elementary education has been at best irregular." Some elementary teachers resist any organized system in their teaching of literature "because they

believe the result would ba a study of literature, something more likely to diminish enjoyment than to enhance it," a condition they believe is often the fate of literature in the secondary school. Loban develops the view that literature should be part of the elementary curriculum, since it can be treated in such a way as to point up its value instead of turning children against it. He proposes a balanced literature program which includes different material relevant to the child's world and growth and which uses the "full range of artistry children may encounter in literature--form, irony, symbolism, and all the language of metaphor on which literature depends." He contends that it is possible to include content and artistry "without formal study or examination" and that "intellectual instruction in literary form does not belong in the elementary school." Specific suggestions are made for balancing the content and the artistic element, the parts of the program which must be considered in planning a literature curriculum for the elementary school. Various approaches for balancing content are reviewed with no one approach recommended over others. Exposure to the artistic elements is necessary although children ought not to study them formally. Loban considers the goals of teaching literature much too important to be approached in any way but with a sequential and balanced program in elementary and secondary schools.[56]

"What is the Role of Children's Literature in the Elementary School?" was the first of a series of articles published under the title "Children's Literature--Old and New." The series was compiled by a committee of the National Council of Teachers of English under the chairmanship of Virginia Reid, who explained in an introduction to the series that the committee, when polled on the purposes and proposed contents of the publication, agreed on the basic theme:

A balanced program in literature for children in elementary grades;

A balance between literature concerns and education concerns...;

A balance between teacher-initiated activities and pupil-initiated activities;

A balance among the types of literature...;

A balance of experiences with literature: reading, listening, speaking, and writing;

A balance between traditional and modern selections.[57]

Recommendations for preparation of the elementary language arts teacher are made in a report of the National Council of Teachers of English Conference on English Education Committee. Statements of assumptions about purposes of teacher education in Language Arts were followed with recommendations in two parts, Essential Competencies and Recommended Options for Further Study. Five areas were included in the competencies considered essential: Knowledge of the English Language; Knowledge of Children's Literature; Ability to assist children to grow in the use of oral language; Ability to guide children in the production and use of written language; Ability to guide growth of children in the art of reading. Each of the competencies was expanded and explained so that implications for teacher education could be drawn from the recommendations.[58]

Summary and Implications for Study

Guides for curriculum and school media programs deal with teaching literature in the elementary school in a variety of ways. The treatment is more likely to be general than specific and implementation will depend on the individuals who interpret the guides. Reading curriculum guides almost always make some reference to literature as a part of the reading program. Guides

which use more general titles, e.g., Communications, Language Arts, make reference to literature in several categories. Skill development is closely tied into the objectives in many guides and skill development in literature is made to be specific in some statements of goals. Guides for school media programs refer to availability and accessibility of materials but make no reference to responsibility for teaching literature. The personnel for a school media program can carry out their functions with minimal concern about literature beyond selection of materials. In the process of materials selection, teachers, curriculum specialists, and media personnel are encouraged to work together to carry out the general objectives of the school curriculum.

Textbooks for children in reading and in language arts follow a sequential scheme of skill development devised by the authors of the text. In the teacher's guides for the text, goals and objectives are outlined, often in great detail. In almost all texts some reference is made to goals leading to understanding and appreciation of literature. Recommended practices for evaluation are less easily identified in the area of literature.

In reading texts there is variety in content including those where the content is written expressly for the text, those with excerpts from longer published works, those which use complete selections from published works, and various combinations of the preceding types of selections. The usual teaching procedure involves use of the same selection for a range of objectives including appreciation of literary style.

Reading and language arts texts often have bibliographies of children's books recommended for reading with the units which are being studied. Implementation of that recommendation could be a subject of study in order to

learn whether the choices are those which have some appeal for the students working with the text or whether work with the text diminishes children's interest in books recommended in that way.

The most common topics from literature which are treated in language arts texts are poetry and use of the library. In many units poetry is often a subject to be appreciated simultaneously with creating a poetic composition. Poetry continues to be one of the types of literature which challenges teachers throughout educational levels. Study of contents of language arts texts might offer clues to ways in which response to poetry becomes positive. Use of the library as a topic for study in language arts is naturally a point for cooperation with personnel in both school media programs and in public libraries.

Textbooks probably do influence content and methods in the elementary school curriculum. Materials for teaching literature, whether in reading texts or in language arts texts, should be examined and evaluated closely in order to know that objectives are being accomplished. Another question which merits study is, to what extent do teachers and curriculum directors assume that literature is being taught if the guides for reading texts or the language arts texts include goals and objectives for teaching literature?

Texts for in-service and pre-service education of teachers include methods of teaching literature with various emphases. Texts for reading methods are likely to discuss interests of children as a motivating force in the process of learning to read. Professional texts in reading methods include some which are specialized to the extent that only techniques for skill development are discussed. Other professional texts include all the language arts and literature is usually considered less specifically than are the other phases of the language

arts. Language arts and reading texts for teachers often include sections about book reports and a reader could get the impression that assigning a book report and reading poetry is a literature program.

Professional books which limit their scope to children's literature cover the field in a variety of ways ranging from those which are strictly content to those which are mainly methods. There are several of the former, few of the latter, and many which combine content and methods. The point of view expressed in the texts currently available for students of children's literature is also varied. The authors agree that literature is an important learning for children in the elementary school. Recommendations are made for each faculty to create the literature curriculum appropriate for the situation and students. The majority of the texts present extensive lists of activities which teachers may plan to incorporate into literature classes. The value of reading to children at each age level is stressed in most books and inferred in others. The individual considered to be most responsible for success of a literature program is the classroom teacher, one who reads, one who knows the content to teach, and one who knows how to encourage children to read and to react to what they read. In the process of planning a literature program, teachers and other researchers in an elementary school might attempt to demonstrate that the teacher does, indeed, make the difference in teaching literature.

In addition to professional texts, the classroom teacher can have access to many other resources for enriching teaching procedures in the literature curriculum. Collections of readings by respected contributors in the field, books which treat one type of literature thoroughly, journals which publish

research findings and other articles about literature, and publications which review new children's books can add new dimensions to the understandings about both the content and the method of teaching literature. Controversial issues can be examined from various points of view by reading journals which strive to keep their readers informed.

A review of the materials for teaching literature to children and materials about children's literature for adults demonstrates extensive interest in the subject. The varied qualities which characterize the materials are reflected in the recommendations for literature programs. It is agreed that it is important to have literature included in the elementary school curriculum. Major questions emerge related to content, method, and evaluation. Curriculum organization continues to be highly individual and dependent on faculty decisions. What evidence do historic and current research offer to guide and influence the teaching of literature in the elementary school?

RESEARCH IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The search for knowledge and the application of that knowledge to practices in teaching literature in the elementary school continue to be meager and difficult to define. Possibly the vagueness of existing programs has contributed to that condition. It is also possible that, with the sophisticated and refined statistical treatments currently available, work with affective responses and content analyses has not been encouraged.

Reviews of Selected Contributions

Although there are limitations in research studies in children's literature in both quantity and quality, contributions have been made toward improving literature programs in the elementary school. A review of studies has relevance to the description of the state of the art of teaching literature in the elementary school to the extent that the research influences practice or suggests and encourages further study. A selected group of research reports will be reviewed. In the summary, observations will be made about the studies and implications will be drawn for teaching literature and for continued research.

Status of Research in Teaching Literature in the Elementary School

Huus reports a dearth of objective data about developing tastes in literature in the elementary grades. In a survey of research she concluded that there had been considerable interest in the topic in the twenties and early thirties, but only a few studies since that time.[59]

Needed research in the teaching of English was the topic for discussion in conferences held in 1963 and reported by Russell. Among other conclusions about research in English, it was reported that teachers in NCTE's Elementary Section are aware of considerable research on the skills of speaking, reading, spelling, and handwriting, fewer research findings in composition and listening, and fewer still in the teaching of literature.[60]

A committee of the NCTE Research Foundation was named to plan and conduct a conference on research in teaching literature. Compared with research in composition and language, little is being done in teaching literature. The group concluded that there is a need for instruments to measure growth in literary taste and appreciation at all levels. Based on that conclusion, the decision was made to initiate a project to create a test which would indicate the reactions to literature of children in third through sixth grades. It was recognized that no real attempt had been made to prove that a standardized test measuring children's literary taste and appreciation in the upper elementary school grades is or is not a possibility. It was hoped that, in the process of answering the questions about the test, other pertinent questions would be answered:

> What is good literature?
> What is there to be sensitive to in good literature?
> Do teachers know what good literature is and how to lead those they teach to an awareness of it?
> What are the variables that operate in an individual's response to literature?

The committee expressed the opinion that, if answers to those questions can be found, the teaching of literature will be more intelligent.[61]

A review of the research on the teaching of literature during the period of April 1964 to April 1967 revealed that, although research

contributions were still comparatively light, the number of studies attempting to analyze students' responses and to measure the effects of instruction had increased. Instead of more ambitious investigations of teaching methods, it was recommended that basic questions should be asked: What are students reading? Where do they get their books? How much time is given to literature instruction?[62]

In a publication by Purves and Beach, studies are reported from early research to the contributions made in the late 1960's. The organization is topical rather than historical and research methodology as well as findings are judged by the reviewers. A bibliography follows each of the three sections with some studies listed which have not been discussed in the text. In each of the areas, few studies deal with students or with topics specifically in the elementary school. There is a section of studies about teaching literature but few of those cited provide evidence for supporting and planning literature programs in the elementary school. One early study, Broening, 1929, found that students in grades four, five, and six gained significantly in numbers and range of books read freely, in ranking reading as a pursuit, and in a test of literary discrimination as a result of literature lessons. More recent studies of a similar nature have been done with students in secondary schools or college classes, and many of those studies were considered by the reviewers to be methodologically suspect.[63]

The complexity of the problem of research in the teaching of literature is discussed by Purves in an article in Elementary English. Because a number of variables interact in the process of reading and responding, it is difficult to conduct research about teaching literature. Teachers are encouraged to

listen to children talk about their literature, one of the sources of data on which to base studies about responses.[64]

The five major articles in the winter, 1976, issue of Research in Teaching English deal with literature. In a bibliography of research for the period from January 1976 to June 1976, ninety-nine items are reported but only six of these were focused on any phase of study about literature. The bibliography of research in teaching of English covering the period July 1, 1975 to December 31, 1975, includes 110 entries with six of those focused directly on the subject of literature in the elementary school and four others which could be considered indirectly related to literature in the elementary school.[65]

Monson and Peltola compiled an annotated bibliography of research in children's literature. They concluded that study of children's literature is developing at a steady pace. During the period 1960-1965 there were only twenty-three studies related to children's literature which could be identified in Dissertation Abstracts International but there were at least thirty-one dissertations on that topic dated 1971. The studies reported in the bibliography were completed or reported within the time period of 1960-1974. Studies of content were numerous. Other topics of considerable concern were influence of literature upon readers and response to literature. Monson and Peltola reported that few studies focused on the complex area of effects of planned literature experiences in the classroom, the influence of curriculum planning or on the effects of teacher preparation upon long term independent reading habits of children.

The Monson-Peltola bibliography is made up of 332 entries. No attempt is made to evaluate the studies nor was a set of evaluative criteria used to

select the studies which were included in the bibliography. The compilers recommend that judgment be based on reading the primary source. The index is designed to help readers locate studies according to information about characteristics of subjects, instruments used, and general content. Perusal of the index reveals considerable attention to adolescents as research subjects, content analysis studies, experimental studies, and reading interests and survey studies. More studies are reported using children in grades four, five, and six than those using children in grades one, two, and three. The bibliography is a useful reference for identifying recent research which has been reported. It is also possible to identify areas of study which have been neglected and in which research might be pursued.[66]

Interests and Tastes

In 1921 Dunn reported a study of the interests of first, second, and third grade children in primary reading materials. Thirty-one selections from primary reading materials were arranged so that elements of interest could be studied. Pairs of selections were read to children, and, immediately after hearing the selections, the children were asked to vote for their favorite. The unit of measurement was a class vote rather than an individual vote. For the entire group of children, surprise and plot were the most significant interest factors. For the boys, animal-ness and surprise were equally interesting. Child-ness and familiar experience had equal weight with surprise in interest for girls.[67]

Waples used several methods to find relationships between interests and actual reading. He reported that the conditions affecting reading satisfaction are related to interests or preferences and the nature, readability,

and accessibility of the literature. He concluded that what people actually do read is not the same as what they would read if all the influencing conditions were satisfactory. Accessibility was reported to be the most important influence on reading.[68]

In a study (in 1921) of reading interest of children between the ages of nine and eighteen, Jordan used a questionnaire. The children were asked to name their five favorite books and their three favorite magazines. Responses from 3598 individuals were studied. Choices of boys were compared with those of girls, and Jordan concluded that the greatest sex differences in choices of reading materials were at ages twelve and thirteen. There were marked differences in boys' and girls' choices of magazines as well as of books. Jordan also studied children's book selection and book withdrawal in eight public libraries in and around New York City. He reported fewer different books named by girls than by boys, as well as an almost complete separation of choices between boys and girls. The boys were interested in reading books described as dealing with mastery, fighting, sensory life for its own sake, and scornful behavior. The girls were interested in books which dealt with maternal instincts, kindliness, attention to others, and response to approveal and scornful behavior.[69]

In a 1924 report, Mackintosh studied children's choices in poetry. One hundred poems were selected from reliable sources and read to children in fifth grade classes. The teacher read a set of ten poems each day. After each poem was read, each child checked his rating of the poem on a six-point scale and told why he liked or disliked the poem. After all ten poems were read, each child checked the five he liked best. The three reasons given most

often for liking a poem were its humor, 32 percent; its subject matter, 23.5 percent; miscellaneous reasons, 17.4 percent. The fourth most frequent reason for liking a poem was dialect, with 6.95 percent of the votes. Mackintosh made several conclusions which had implications for teaching literature in the elementary school. She concluded that there was little difference in the poetry interests of boys and girls at the fifth grade level; that more attention should be given to poems with humor and dialect; that a good poem has several characteristics which children like, and it probably contains an appeal to more than one grade level.[70]

Terman and Lima reported a study of reading records kept over a period of two months by two groups of children between the ages of six and sixteen. One group was composed of about 1000 unselected children. The second group consisted of 1000 children with intelligence quotients of 135 or higher on the Stanford-Binet intelligence test. Individual reading records showed great differences within both groups in amount of reading. The gifted children read more than did the average children in the unselected group. The types of books read by the gifted group were judged to be of better average quality than the books read by the control group. There were few differences in reading interests observed between boys and girls at the ages of six and seven; however, by the age of nine, differences in interests began to appear and continued throughout the age groups studied. The girls reported that 30 percent of the books they had read recently were books they had already read, the boys only 18 percent. In one part of the Terman and Lima study, the choices of children in grades one to eight were studied. Among the twenty favorite choices of the girls only four books also appeared on the boys' list of favorites and Terman

and Lima concluded that the four books were similar in characteristics to the other books on the boys' list. The implication seemed to be that girls would read boys' books but the reverse would probably not happen often.[71]

Characteristics of children's favorite books were reported by Rankin. She based her findings on the circulation of fiction from eight libraries over a year's time. The list of books with the greatest circulation from each of the eight libraries were compared, and ten books were found on the lists of five or more libraries. Among the factors which Rankin found the most popular books had in common were title indicating content and settings familiar to American children. In the six sea stories in the group, the hero was an American boy. Rankin also concluded that girls drew a large share of the top thirty-five books from the libraries. In her study of the circulation of Newbery Award-winning books, she concluded that only once had the committee which selects the Newbery Award chosen a book which was popular with children. It also was concluded that the two groups of books studied (Newbery winners and high-circulation books) were different in format, theme, story setting, principal characters, style of writing, and readability.[72]

Peltola studied the responses of 3,187 children in grades four and six who were asked to name their favorite book characters. The characters named were represented in 963 different trade books or series. When these titles were studied, it was discovered that fourth grade students named significantly more recommended books than did sixth grade students. Realistic stories were chosen more often than make-believe stories. Those children who chose "not recommended" series books tended to be higher in reading achievement than children who named characters from "recommended" books. Fourth grade boys

showed more individuality in choice of a favorite book than did fourth grade girls. In the sixth grade, there was no difference in the number of boys and girls who chose one of the books mentioned most frequently by their sex, but more boys than girls chose a book which no one else in the group chose. A test of knowledge about the books named most frequently by each grade and sex group was constructed and administered to a sample group. The books known by large percentages of children in the sample group were easy books, books from which dramatic presentations have been made, and books which were named frequently by children in both grades four and six. Some children who had not read the books could answer questions about them because of motion pictures, television presentations, or class discussions.[73]

Characteristics of users and non-users of elementary school libraries and public libraries were reported by Ekechukwu. Findings showed a significant relationship between use and non-use of public libraries and attitudes toward public libraries by 472 students in fifth grade. The relationship between use of school libraries and attitudes toward school libraries was not significant. A greater percentage of children were school library users than were users of public libraries. Sex was not a significant variable in school or public library use; however, significantly more girls than boys had favorable attitudes toward public libraries. Distance of residence from public libraries affected public library use. The most disliked element for both types of libraries was rules and regulations. The major reason for use of the libraries was for borrowing books to read outside the library.[74]

In 1972 Feeley reported on interest patterns and media preferences of boys and girls. Five hundred thirty-two children in fourth and fifth grades

responded to an inventory of their interests in print and on television. Sex was a major determiner of interests. Boys liked sports, excitement, and informational content while girls preferred social empathy, fantasy, and content dealing with their recreational interests. Boys were least interested in fantasy, social empathy, and artistic content; girls were least interested in sports, science, and social studies. Race did not seem to be an important factor in interests but socioeconomic status did seem to be a factor with lower socioeconomic status children showing stronger preferences for fantasy. Girls preferred to read more than boys and lower socioeconomic non-blacks preferred to view more than middle or higher socioeconomic non-blacks. All children preferred to watch rather than to read all types of content.[75]

Poetry preferences, according to findings in a study by Terry, have not changed to any great extent since the poetry preference studies of the 1920's and 1930's. Children continue to like rhyme, rhythm and narrative poems while showing dislike for haiku and forms "hard to understand." The students in forty-five classrooms in four states, grades four through six, reacted to poems using a five-point scale ranging from "hated" to "great." Terry recommends more oral reading of poetry by teachers and more attention from teachers to children's preferences.[76]

In a report published by the NCTE Committee on Research, Favat proposes that research in the area of children's interests consists of two kinds of studies. Descriptive studies seek to list what it is that children are reading and analytic studies seek to explain why children are interested in a particular kind of reading. After a brief explanation of methodology for analytic investigations, Favat uses the method he proposes to establish reasons for

children's liking fairy tales. The report concludes with implications for researchers and for persons working with children.[77]

A state-wide survey conducted in Minnesota by using school librarians to name the five favorite titles in the school library during the current year, resulted in choices of a wide variety of favorites. Responses were received from 515 libraries with a total of 434 different titles from elementary schools in 1977. The fifteen favorite titles reported for 1977 and number of times each was named was:

Little House Books (218)

Charlotte's Web (168)

Are You There God? It's Me Margaret (116)

Curious George (111)

Guiness Book of World Records (105)

Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing (100)

Boxcar Children (89)

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (87)

Encyclopedia Brown (71)

Freaky Friday (71)

Hardy Boys (57)

Nancy Drew (56)

Where the Red Fern Grows (51)

Great Monsters of the Movies (48)

Mouse and the Motorcycle (31)

Content Analysis

Six themes recurrent in children's literature (fiction) published in the United States from 1850 to 1964 were identified by Shaw to be: Search for Values; Problems of Growing Up; Travel and Understanding People in Foreign Lands; Lives of Heroes; Fun and Fairy Tales; The Urge to Know. The popularity of each theme varied in different periods in history and some themes were popular throughout the period studied. The conclusion was reached that, for the period from 1850 to 1964, the social, economic, and political thought of America has been reflected in the books written for its children.[79]

Homze examined the content of children's books. She gave special attention to differences between realistic fiction published between 1920 and 1940 and from 1945 to 1960. In contemporary children's books, children are main characters, and the adult is given less attention. The settings in children's books are more often urban than rural if the books were published in the latter of the two periods studied.[80]

All available versions of three children's classics were the subject of a study by Stein. For Robinson Crusoe, Treasure Island, and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, a systematic examination of the original versions, the adaptations, and the abridgements was made and reported. Illustration and format were considered as well as text. Stein concluded that the versions using word lists or simplified vocabularies tend to use the story as a tool for teaching reading skills rather than as communication between an author and his reader. Many of the original books are presented attractively, are readable for children, and it is a waste of money to buy any of the abridged versions.[81]

Napier studied the North American Indian character in twenty selected children's books. The books ranged in copyright dates from 1931 to 1966 and in historical setting from the 1700's to post World War II. Fifteen tribes were represented. The North American Indian character still appears in children's literature but the traditional stereotype is not persisting. The North American Indian is seldom shown in contemporary circumstances; however, he is physically attractive and his language is fluent and grammatical. The representation of the North American Indian character was judged acceptable by the researcher.[82]

In a study of selected Greek myths, Constant used myths written in the original classical Greek with versions in English written for children. It was to be seen whether changes were made which altered the authenticity and certain literary bearings of the myths. In every instance the stories differed from the originals. While the ancients presented the complete lives of the major characters, most of the adaptations developed only a few incidents in their lives. The characters in the children's works have been either more or less fully developed, or they have been altered, eliminated, or added to the story. It was concluded that the versions written for children do not always provide children with a desirable literary experience.[83]

Bouchard compared children's independent reading interests and the content of stories in selected basal reading texts. Differences between children's choice of content in library books and content of reading texts were significant. No significant differences were found among the reading interests of children of different races. Socioeconomic grouping and grade level also made little difference. Sex appeared to be a predominant factor in determining interests.[84]

Violence in children's literature was the subject of a study by Blatt. Books selected for content analysis were those designated as realistic fiction on the American Library Association list of Notable Books between 1960 and 1970. Over the ten year period there was no substantial increase in the violent content of children's books. Historical fiction was, on the average, twice as violent as modern realistic fiction. Children's responses to violent episodes indicated that children liked the episodes that were read to them. Children from inner city schools more often said they liked violent episodes than those in rural or suburban schools. Children from the inner city schools also demonstrated a higher level of understanding of the stories than shown by the other children in the study.[85]

The content of children's books of the 1930's and the 1960's was examined by Hillman to answer questions about male and female roles in stories published during those two periods of time. There were more males than females in both time periods. Males were aggressive and competent, females showed affiliation/dependence and sadness in both periods. Emotions expressed by the sexes changed over time with males expressing more surprise and fantasy and females becoming more angry and curious in the more recent period. Stereotypes were more prevalent in the early period. The greatest differences in sex roles involved the diversity of occupations related to each sex. Males were depicted in jobs associated with power and prestige while females were cast in domestic roles with few exceptions.[86]

Responses to Literature

A publication by Purves and Rippere explores the complex problem of classifying the elements of writing about literature. In the introduction to

the work, Squire cautions the reader that the elements of writing about literature are not necessarily identical with the elements of response to literature. The research report is an elaboration of method to answer the question, What does the understanding of a literary text involve? Recognizing that literature is an inseparable mixture of content and form, an attempt has been made to analyze the content of what is written about literature. The term "elements," as used in the report is considered neither exhaustive nor taxonomical. The contents of the essay a writer has written about literature would be, if the scheme were used, analyzed according to the elements arranged under four general headings: engagement-involvement, perception, interpretation, and evaluation. Recommendations are made for the system of analysis to be used for research as well as for a point of departure for curriculum experimentation. In spite of its highly structured sound, the approach aims for the reader to be flexible in the treatment of a literary work.[87]

Monson investigated children's responses to humor by using four types of questions: one was unstructured and three were forms of multiple choice and alternate response questions. The questions were based on excerpts from recommended children's books reproduced for the study. The children were fifth grade students whose reading scores were above 3.5 grade level. Differences in the responses made by children to structured and unstructured questions were greater for boys than for girls. Boys more frequently judged selections humorous when they were presented in a structured situation. Children in the higher intelligence group judged excerpts to be humorous more often than did children in middle or lower intelligence groups. The evidence suggested that different methods of questioning result in different responses from children.[88]

Children's responses to literary style were examined by Henze. An attitude questionnaire based on The Hobbit and a test over elements of style were used with children in sixth grade. A pre-test was used before a four week period of teaching about literary style. Experimental and control groups did not differ in initial knowledge of style. The post-tests showed that children in the experimental group knew significantly more about elements of literary style after instruction. There was no significant relationship between children's test scores on literary style and their scores on a measurement for listening enjoyment.[89]

Fisher assessed fifth grade students for the influence of reading and discussing on attitudes toward American Indians. Reading and discussing caused a change in attitude judged to be favorable toward American Indians that was significantly greater than the change in the control group. There was a significant positive correlation between information gained and attitude change in the group that read and discussed but that correlation was not found in the control group. Socioeconomic level influenced change to the extent that it was greater in upper than in lower levels, but intelligence, sex, and reading achievement did not influence change. Evidence suggested that attitude changes of girls were greater than those of boys in the silent reading situation, while attitude changes of boys were greater in a reading-discussion situation.[90]

The influences of reading on the attitude of children toward Eskimos was studied by Tauran. The children in the study were third grade students, caucasian, and middle class. Material portraying Eskimos favorably and unfavorably was prepared by the experimenter. Results showed that the racial ideas of third grade children can be influenced in the positive or the negative

direction. It was also shown that it is possible to strengthen an initial positive response from children in such a way that they will be able to resist unfavorable information.[91]

Results of a study of attitudes of sixth grade students toward literary characters who speak regional dialects were reported by Peterson. The children in the experimental group read passages in dialect and the subjects in the control group read adaptations of the same passages in standard English. Students reading the dialect passages reacted in a generally neutral to mildly positive manner, while students reading standard English passages gave more positive responses to each of the passages. The response to the question dealing with the probable success of the characters in school showed that students who read the passages with dialect responded significantly differently from those who read the passages written in standard English. Boys and girls differed in their responses to the language of the characters.[92]

Frankel studied the effects of reading and discussing The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn on racial attitudes of students in ninth grade. One group read and discussed the story in class and the other group read at home as "outside" reading. The study of Huckleberry Finn was reported to have changed significantly the attitudes of adolescent boys toward blacks and the self-images of black students. Students who studied the book in class showed greater positive change in responses than those who read the book as "outside" reading.[93]

Papers and discussion related to literature from the Anglo-American seminar on the Teaching of English are reported by Squire.[94] Although reactions were described as highly individualistic more unanimity than division was observed. James Britton spoke about teaching literature in the elementary school.

He expressed the idea "that responses of most adult readers are sharpened... if [the responses] are in some measure formulated, so that [the reader is] aware of the nature of the processes that have led to satisfaction"; but this is "not true of children under the age of eleven or so." Children's responses to literature are "lively, discriminating, and complex," but they will not be helped if attempts are made "to formulate those responses." In his description of the elementary school, Britton said there will be talk "about the people and events of literature [but] not about forms, conventions, devices, techniques." He warned that "we should be more afraid of introducing such matters too early than too late. In the matter of analysis of a work of literature their teachers in turn have taken over from the critics or their English professors--this is not a short cut to literary appreciation; it is a short circuit that destroys the whole system." The problem, says Britton, is not so much what to do with books but making enough books sufficiently accessible for children to read.[95]

Teachers need to recognize individual differences among students but can be guided by the general observation that up to about age eleven the young child responds to literature "directly and unashamedly." At about nine or ten the child begins to develop an "extroverted" outlook; at that age, he is likely to be reading widely and with great speed.[96]

Teaching Practices

Teaching practices were studied by Cohen, who attempted to improve motivation for those students who could not read well by reading literature to the children. Attempts were made to increase actual achievement in reading of

children with culturally limited backgrounds who tend to fall behind in reading and therefore in academic achievement. The population came from seven elementary schools in New York City. For the pre-tests of the experiment there were twenty second grade classes with 580 students. For the post-tests there were 285 students, 130 from the control group and 155 from the experimental group. The experimental variable was the story reading, introduced and maintained by the classroom teachers. All classes used a basal reader. For the story reading, fifty books were given to the teacher to be read. Some of the books were left out in the room, and others were put away. The books were all considered good stories of contemporary realism. Along with other selection criteria, the stories were chosen on the basis of their potential for the reader's emotional identification with the characters. A manual of activities and story reading techniques was given to each teacher in the experimental group along with a schedule for reading the books. In the control groups the teacher might read a story occasionally, but no plan or schedule was set up. The Metropolitan Reading Achievement tests and a free association vocabulary test were used. The experimental group showed a significantly greater increase when compared with the control group in vocabulary, word knowledge, and reading comprehension and a statistically significant increase in "quality of vocabulary." There were no significant ability differences between groups in word discrimination. The researcher interpreted the findings to mean that it is important to read to children as a precursor to success in learning to read, especially for socially disadvantaged children.[97]

Reading consultants in one school system evaluated book report practices for grades two through seven. Teachers responded to a questionnaire about

frequency and use of book reports in their classes. For grades two and three, the majority of teachers did not require a certain number of book reports, nor did they require any written reports. Many used means of reporting about books other than writing or formal talks. For grades four to six, the number of reports required ranged from none to twenty-five, written reports were used by some teachers, and many teachers used means other than written reports. The article suggests what should be expected in book reports from children on different levels and offers some guidelines. The authors discourage the use of rigid rules for book reports.[98]

One investigator conducted a study in her home diocese to determine the effectiveness of literature in the school system, grades five through eight. The population included 1000 children and forty teachers. Assessments were made of student attitudes toward literature and teacher attitudes toward certain practices in teaching literature. Among the students, the girls expressed a more positive attitude toward literature than did the boys and the fifth grade students showed a more positive attitude toward literature than did the eighth grade students. Teachers rated higher than the children in attitude toward literature, and the correlation between teacher attitude and pupil attitude was negligible. The teachers' report of the practices they should carry out and that of what they <u>were</u> doing was not the same. In the middle grades, 91.68 percent of the teachers thought they should read to the children but comparatively few did so. From the entire group of forty teachers, more than half (22) had not read any children's books which were new to them during the preceding year, while 91.67 percent of the total number of teachers expressed the opinion that they should read children's books. The researcher

concluded that there is much to be improved in the teaching of children's literature at the elementary school level.[99]

Powell conducted a study in grades four, five, and six in order to compare the use of classroom libraries and public libraries. He concluded that materials are used more frequently if library books for this purpose are accessible in the classroom.[100]

The Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching of English, reported by Squire, made observations and recommendations about teaching practices for literature in the elementary school.[101] Modes of approach to literature were considered to be as important as selection of materials. They were listed as (1) the Individual Child with the Individual Book, (2) Literature as Group Experience, and (3) Presentation of Literary Material Accompanied by Discussion. Guided reading should not be relegated to out-of-school, "when-you-have-nothing-else-to-do" times. Literature as a group experience includes storytelling, folk songs, films, creative dramatics, role playing, and other group activities. By this approach, a rich sensitivity to the pleasures of a shared aesthetic experience can be developed. Presentation of literary material may be accompanied by discussion, but this approach is usually reserved for difficult selections. Approaches and emphases vary with the age of students.

The direct study of literary criticism, literary history, or critical theory does not seem necessary in the elementary schools. "The dryness of schematic analysis of imagery, symbols, myth, structural relations, et al., should be avoided passionately at school and often at college. <u>It is literature, not literary criticism, which is the subject</u>"[102] (italics Harding's). The teacher, in his education to become a teacher, should be equipped to make

the judgments about how much information and which information about the background of the author and historical setting will be useful to the reader.

More questions were asked in Response to Literature than answers given about selection of literary works to be included in the curriculum. How much should pupils' interest influence content of curriculum? How much variety and balance should be evident? How much media other than books should be used? Questions were also asked about sequence. Research was considered to be needed for answering questions about selection and sequence of content.

The study of literature in the elementary school was reported not to be teaching reading from a basic reader. Study of literature is judged to be coming into its own in American schools, in an informal but sequential pattern. Literature is not so unnaturally separated from children's writing. If we need any single reform, it is to reintroduce pleasure into the English period, as one contributor to Response to Literature believes. The teacher needs to know the material being taught but not for the purpose of handing it over directly to the students. The good teacher is one who can combine, wisely, scholarly understanding of literature and awareness of children.

In a publication by NCTE, Bleich describes an approach to study of literature which includes the subjective bases and purposes for reading and coming to literary judgments. The intent of the author is to provide a means for presenting literature in a way that will produce an internal motive for reading and thinking about literature so that the reader may attain a new understanding of self. The course of study described consists of four parts: (1) Thoughts and feelings, (2) Feelings about literature, (3) Deciding on literary importance, and (4) Interpretation as a communal act. Bleich attempts

to demonstrate that literature exists altogether on the basis of the subjective re-creation of the reader. He also recognizes that the method of studying literary response which is being proposed is incompatible with traditional grading procedures but he believes that fact should not inhibit the teacher from employing methods of subject criticism.[103]

Morris studied the differential effectiveness of two teaching methods upon the appreciation of literature by sixth grade students. Classes were taught using either the Preplanned Sequentially-Structured Approach or the Incidental Unstructured Approach. Performance of the two groups was compared on the basis of understanding, attitudes toward prose and poetry, and interpretation. Results indicated that pupils of high intelligence interpret literature on a significantly higher level and show evidence of greater writing proficiency than pupils of middle or lower intelligence regardless of the teaching method which is used.[104]

The role of the teacher in a literature program was assessed by Bowen. Five hundred ninety children were measured for reading performance in terms of amount of reading, range of types of literature read, and quality of materials read by students in three programs. The teacher's role differed in each program. In one, literature was emphasized with pupil initiative dominant. In another, literature was emphasized with an active teacher role. In the third program, literature was not emphasized. An active teacher role produced highest achievement in amount, quality, and range of literature read. Teaching children the mechanics of reading or using literary materials for teaching reading were not guarantees that children would find their interests satisfied. Children who had access to literary materials in the classroom read more

literature and less grade-level materials than did children who were limited to classroom collections of grade-level materials.[105]

Sirota found that a planned literature program of oral reading by teachers can affect quantity and quality of voluntary reading. In a study conducted with 275 students in fifth grade, experimental classes were given programs with 20-30 minutes of oral reading by the teacher and the control group had no oral reading by the teacher. All classes had identical classroom book collections of fifty books each, and all students kept records of their voluntary reading. The quantity of books read was directly related to students' initial skills. On the quality variable, girls and students with high initial skills read more selected and recommended books. Skilled readers in the experimental group read more books of quality than did readers of the same ability in the control groups.[106]

In another study focused on effects of a program of reading aloud to children, Porter used a population of middle grade children in an inner city. The oral reading was done by high school juniors. Middle grade children in the experimental group increased in reading achievement and in interest in reading, with more statistically significant scores made by fourth than by fifth or sixth grade students. When comparing experimental and control groups, differences were consistently greater for scores of boys than for scores of girls. The high school students who did the reading increased in their reading ability and in their positive self-concept.[107]

Students in second grade were the population studied by Raftery in an attempt to discover the effect of a literature program on reading achievement. The purpose of the research was to find whether the mode of presenting

literature or the type of literature presented to children caused a measurable increase in their reading achievement. Elementary education majors read aloud to students on a tri-weekly basis. Children who were read to made significantly greater gains in reading achievement compared with children in the control group for whom there was no oral reading. The type of literature which was read did not seem to be related to achievement.[108]

The NCTE Cooperative Test of Critical Reading and Appreciation, "A Look at Literature," was compared with reading achievement and achievement on other tests. The population for the study was 206 children in fourth and fifth grades. There was a significant correlation between scores on "A Look at Literature" and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests. Ashley concluded that the NCTE test did measure well enough to provide some information about appreciation of literature.[109]

Lyons studied the effect of a program of children's literature on the reading achievement of 269 children in first and second grades. Trained undergraduate college students administered the program which was tested and evaluated. Data analysis indicated that neither of the twelve week experimental programs significantly affected reading achievement. Questionnaires were used with the teachers and the responses to the questionnaires indicated that teachers of the second grade literature groups and control groups read to the children frequently and that they used books which were recommended for older children.[110]

The influence of children's literature and oral discussion on oral language of young children was the subject of a study by Fisher. Children in kindergarten, first, and second grades were taught by undergraduate college

college students for twelve weeks, with three sessions of instruction per week. There were no significant differences between treatment groups on acquisition of syntactic structures or on acquisition of vocabulary. There were no significant interaction effects of treatment, grade level or sex on acquisition of either syntactic structures or vocabulary. Analysis of variance did indicate significant differences between sexes on the acquisition of vocabulary in favor of boys.[111]

An examination of methods of teaching basic sight vocabulary was made by comparing multi-media picture books with word drill from the Dolch Word List. Subjects were students in first grade, divided into three groups for experimental purposes. Hession concluded that children who have free access to good children's literature, presented in multi-media form, will acquire a basic sight vocabulary equal to or better than those children exposed to an approach emphasizing drill on specific sight words.[112]

In England, a Committee of Inquiry was appointed to study the teaching of reading and other uses of English in British Schools. One major section of the report of the committee deals with literature. One finding was that teachers do not read for their own pleasure, do not know children's books, and do not know children's interests. The recommendation is made that there be better training for teachers so they do read and do know children's books. Another recommendation, one related directly to method, urges less organization of literature teaching by themes because, according to the findings of the study, organization by themes results in attention to the theme but not to literature.[113]

The National Assessment of Educational Progress reports the survey of attainments of students at ages of 9, 13, 17, and adult. Three major objectives

guides the assessment of literature:

(1) Read literature of excellence

(2) Become engaged in finding meanings and evaluate a work literature

(3) Develop a continuing interest and participation in literature and the literary experience.

The results of the NAEP are reported for each age group by geographical region, sex, color, parental education, size and type of community. Differences between and among groups for each theme and for each objective were great and complex.[114]

Summary and Implications for Study

Studies of children's reading interests appear to be less numerous in recent years compared with the predominance of that type of investigation during earlier periods of time. Studies of response to literature and those which deal with content analysis do provide bases for making interpretations about children's interests but the direct thrust of recent studies has not been toward finding out more about children's interests in reading or in topics about which they may read. Results of studies about teaching practices also provide information about children's reaction to method and content which is a reflection of interest.

A review of types of interest studies from early efforts to those reported recently may raise questions and topics worthy of continued study. In an early study reported in this review (Dunn, 1921), responses were given orally by children in a class setting where there is no way to estimate peer influence. With tape recorders available for children's use, studies could be carried out

which examine the differences in children's choices depending on peer influence. In another early study (Waples, 1939) reported the strong influence of accessibility on children's interests or expression of interests. The school organization which employs a media-center provides an environment for studying the influence of accessibility on the reading habits and interests of children who use the media-center. The study of school libraries compared with public libraries (Ekechukwu, 1972) can be interpreted to suggest need for teaching about use of public libraries as well as continued exploration of children's attitude toward libraries.

Interest studies continue to be limited by methods for getting information about children's choices. Library circulation statistics are limited by lack of knowing whether the books really were read. Children's reports of their favorite books are influenced by recency of reading. If complete reading records were kept by children, choices of favorites from those lists would increase the validity of a study of reading interests. Librarians' reports of children's reading choices give clues to children's interests but caution must be used when the findings are interpreted. Series books pose problems for tabulating and reporting data in surveys of children's choices. Books by one author, not necessarily series books, also complicate the data about popular titles. A continuing caution in interpreting data about most popular titles is that of remembering to recognize the large number of choices which fall outside the top five or ten choices.

For many years studies of children's interests reported differences between choices made by girls and choices made by boys. Often the differences of choices between the sexes were reported to be less with younger children than

with children above the age of ten. Amount of reading and agreement about favorites has also been reported to vary according to the sex of the reader. Research is needed to demonstrate the effect of content and of efforts to eliminate sexist attitudes on children's expressed reading interests.

Studies of preferences and interests in poetry have been conducted throughout the continuum of research in children's literature. The study by Mackintosh (1924) asked children to recall the five favorite poems while the research by Terry (1974) asked children to react to poems read to them, using a five-point scale for their judgment of choice. Though the methods of study vary, the findings about children's preferences of poetry show much similarity over time with children continuing to express a liking for rhyme, rhythm and story poems. Teachers observe that many children are coming to school with little or no exposure to nursery rhymes and jingles previously assumed to be in the experience of children in pre-school years. The reliability of that observation could be tested in studies with young children followed by studies of the effect of limited early exposure to rhymes on later attitude toward poetry. Limited exposure to poetry may also be a condition to consider in teacher preparation or teacher in-service programs. Systematic observation may show that the earlier literature programs of students who eventually become teachers may be related to the way in which the teacher presents poetry to children.

Most studies and observations of children's interests reveal that children like humor or, in their words, funny books. Little has been done in research about funny books beyond the indicators of general interest. Books that make children laugh are important for the teacher to know about. Research

efforts should be directed toward finding out what makes a child think a book is funny; adults' judgments of humor in literature should be studied in order to help teachers select books which will interest children.

Few studies have focused on media other than books. In some studies of interests, the influence of television and movies is reflected in the findings. Books which have also been movies appear on popularity lists for all ages of children. The impact of television on children's expressed interests can be seen in both informal and formal assessments of preferences and in studies of the way in which children use time outside of school. In one study (Feeley, 1972) there were differences between boys and girls in subjects of interest and there were differences in socioeconomic groups in preferences, but one generalization included all children, i.e., all children preferred to watch rather than to read all types of content.

Children's choices of favorites, especially for older children, continue to be different from books recommended as the best literature. There continues to be a lack of longitudinal studies about children's reading patterns such that conclusions might be drawn about the reading habits of the individual who, when an adult, reads as a worthwhile and enjoyable activity. Speculations are made about the belief children will find the best if they are surrounded by it, or that they have to read so much trash before they get to be avid readers, or to look what adults are reading, but no reports are available to test the hypotheses proposed by those observations.

A diminishing proportionate number of interest studies may be considered positive in that there is the inference of an increase in numbers of other types of studies, but researchers should be aware of negative aspects of the trend.

Interest studies do perform a major function in the concerns about teaching literature in that they focus attention on the child. For that reason, interest and preference studies are a significant part of the whole view; if they are minimized or eliminated, the attention will be on content and method only, concerns that are mainly adult in origin.

Content analysis is one of the types of research which has increased during the 1960's and 1970's. Content analysis demands careful reading and objective, systematic classification. Use of a panel for judging and classifying the content of books rather than relying on the judgment of one individual creates more confidence in the results than a report of classification based on judgment of only one reader. Many of the studies which have been conducted with content analysis appear to have used only one rater or judge and seem to challenge the theory that a story depends to a great extent on what the reader brings to the story at the time of reading. Content analysis has frequently been the approach used for socio-political content and for that subject matter the emotional tone of the reader is a variable difficult to control.

Few studies of content analysis have used children's reactions to specific content identified by the researcher. Book selection policies and practices are often determined by adult judgment of content without validating the judgment with reactions from children who will be expected to read the books. Efforts should be continued through research to establish relationships between adults' perception of certain content and children's perception of that content.

Content analysis studies can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Teachers and librarians responsible for book selection can use the evidence about content to guide them toward a balanced collection of books for children. Content analysis can be used to establish the base for a didactic approach to literature, one which emphasizes the content with minimal concern for the literary artistry of story or poem. Research in content analysis offers possibilities for examining historical trends in content of children's books, study which provides findings for the enrichment of the adult student of children's literature and, in some cases, indirectly for the children who are taught by the adult.

Response to literature is the goal of teaching literature in the elementary school. Research and methods of teaching and evaluating literature in the elementary school will vary according to the way in which the term response to literature is interpreted by classroom teachers and other persons influencing the literature curriculum. For some it means knowledge about a work and facts about an author's life. For others, response is composition, i.e., the writing the student does after reading or hearing a literary work. Is the response immediate or slow to show in the behavior of the reader? The possibility for questions about response to literature is limitless; therein lies the basis for defending diversity and variety of approaches to literature.

Are teachers alert to the influences working in the environment when children respond in certain ways to certain stories? There is the possibility that children will decide they do not like something if they realize they must write about it after they say they do like it. It could very well be that children say they like something because it is an agreeable way to act, but,

if they must write a sentence or two after they approve, they may have second thoughts about it. Teachers often rely on a chorus of acclaim for a book or a poem. Group reaction may be reliable, but peer influence, especially from a group leader, can produce a result different from individual interviews about the same story or poem.

Studies have been conducted which demonstrate that teachers can plan lessons in literature which will influence children's attitude toward the people they read about in their literature. Response to literary style has also been demonstrated to change as a result of teaching about elements of literary style. Children's responses to characters in stories were shown to be influenced by the way in which the characters were portrayed to use the English language. Studies which take children's responses into account do enunciate the effect of the teacher on children's responses, an effect which should be the focus of continued study in the area of children's response to literature.

The scheme for analysis of a piece of writing about a literary work as suggested by Purves and others may appear too complicated for the elementary school. Closer study of a system for analysis may reveal possibilities for application. Adaptation can be made so the scheme is more appropriate for young children. What do children say about the stories they read? What do children write about their reading? Do journals and reading records stimulate or stifle interest in reading?

The participants in the Dartmouth Seminar assumed that there should and would be literature in the curriculum of the elementary school. The general tone of many recommendations is for an informal program because children's responses to literature which are lively and complex would not be helped if an

attempt were made to formalize the responses. Accessibility of books is of paramount importance if children are to have the opportunity to respond to literature.

Research in teaching practices, though possibly increased in number, continues to be ambiguous and inconclusive for the most part. Research in the conventional meaning of the term is difficult in any teaching-learning situation and it is especially difficult in literature. Affective behaviors are difficult to assess, the teacher variable is difficult to deal with, and describing programs presents a problem which limits interpretation when studies are done. The scarcity of studies of methods of teaching literature may be a credit to the wisdom of the researchers rather than a condition for which apologies must be made.

Few studies have been done to test the influence of the teacher in the literature program. One study showed that teachers do not do what they think should be done with literature. Some proof exists that even for children with low ability and low achievement, time spent with literature is positively related to achievement in learning to read. Teaching practices which recommend literature for those who can read while using drill and oral reading for those who cannot read may need to be revised.

One problem which seems to cause concern among researchers who try to study effectiveness of methods for teaching literature is the time period necessary to demonstrate results of an experimental program. Teachers, school administrators, and researchers who believe in the value of a literature program could demonstrate a planned program by contrasting it with the isolated programs which extend over a period of a few weeks, or contrasting it with teaching in which there is no attention to literature.

The effectiveness of oral reading in stimulating interest in reading has been demonstrated in a number of studies. The research in which high school students were the readers for young children demonstrated an additional value, that of increased reading ability for the high school student. The topic of reading orally to children offers great potential for systematic study with a number of variables including age of children, time spent listening, books selected for reading, who does the oral reading, and attitude and interest in reading shown by the children who listened to the teacher.

In the 1970's there is evidence of strong emphasis on teaching values in the elementary school. Often the approach to values teaching is through use of literature, usually literature which has been judged by adults to have content to satisfy certain goals. Research could be designed to investigate the relationships between children's values, children's reading habits and attitudes, and a program which uses literature to teach values.

Methods of assessing growth in learning about literature continues to hamper studies of teaching practice. Reports of the problems encountered by the National Assessment of Educational Programs in deciding about objectives and measuring instruments attest to the fact that the task of assessing progress in literature is complicated. The findings of the committee which studied English in British schools are reported in general recommendations for improving teacher preparation and methods of organization for teaching.

Both in the materials for teaching literature and in the research about literature, the importance of the teacher is either inferred or stated directly. Teacher characteristics for assuming this critical role merit attention of researchers. Studies of interests, of content, of responses, and of methods

cannot be isolated in work with children and the variable which forces a combination of areas of concern is the teacher.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Few generalizations can be made about the state of the art of teaching literature in the elementary school. There is lively interest in the subject. Research about topics related to literature in the elementary school has increased noticeably during the 1960's and 1970's. Along with the increased interest and research, there continues to be considerable diversity in objectives, content, and approaches for teaching literature in kindergarten through grade six.

Five situational descriptions encompass the majority of approaches to teaching literature in the elementary school. It is possible that in any one school or in any one classroom more than one of the approaches may be used with varying emphases. Furthermore, each of the situations is described generally and implementation from one school and from one teacher to another will produce differences within the program.

1. Teaching literature in a designated period of the day with the subject called literature. The methods used are similar to those used in secondary schools and colleges, and the students are treated as adults. In schools organized with ability groupings, the higher achievers are often the students who are in the literature classes. In some schools, the plan for teaching literature is developed around discussion questions for certain selected books which all students read and discuss. Relatively little teaching of literature is done with this approach, and when it is used, it is likely to be found in the upper grades of the elementary school.

2. The faculty members of an elementary school consider access to the library to be the literature program. In some cases the program is carried out in a structured manner with scheduled library periods, instruction in use of the library, and reading guidance given by the personnel of the library. In other cases the program is completely informal to the extent that the materials center is available for use by children and they can withdraw books for their personal reading. Recent changes in organization of media centers to include non-print as well as print media may influence the approach. The situation may also be affected by patterns of school organization, especially in those schools which use some system other than self-contained classrooms.
3. The teaching of literature is considered a peripheral responsibility of the school so neither faculty nor curriculum can be identified easily. Arguments to support the approach include the fact that fewer people are reading so teaching about literature is not practical. The teacher's aide, the student teacher, or a volunteer may be responsible for oral reading and for going to the library with children. The frequency of this approach is difficult to estimate.
4. A frequent practice is that of including or using literature as a secondary goal in the teaching and learning process. It may be done with reading, language arts, social studies, science, or other areas, but the objectives are only indirectly related to literature. Book reports are given for improving speaking and listening skills,

lines of poetry are studies for finding subjects and predicates, or a story is read so that drill can be assigned with new words from the story. A book is assigned for a student's social studies report and a bibliography of books about the social studies topic is given to students which they are to use for selecting books for personal reading. Teaching of values receives strong emphasis in elementary schools and literature is often used for inculcating values through reading or listening to a story. Books are selected and taught because they are written about a certain topic, e.g., death, friendship, or courage. Literature is used in one or more areas of the curriculum for its content but little if any teaching of the artistry or enjoyment of literature is done.

5. The teaching of literature is a planned program for which the main objective is enjoyment of literature and continued interest in reading through developing a sensitivity to literary artistry as well as to content. The program recognizes characteristics of children including differences between individuals and between groups of children. Evaluation is based on how much a child reads, on what he reads, and on his attitude toward reading. The teacher and the students know that the literature being read is the main goal of instruction and not a secondary objective. Teaching literature using this approach is relatively infrequent but there is evidence that it is increasing in use. The approach is highly individual and success is dependent on the teacher to a greater extent than with any of the other approaches.

Recommendations for Teaching Practices

Based on the evidence which has been reviewed, the approach which is recommended is the planned program for teaching literature. The specific structure of the program should be individually designed by a teacher or a group of teachers so that the sequence and choices of selections are appropriate for the students and the teachers. However, an attempt will be made to go beyond the generalized recommendation to plan a literature program by describing what, to this writer, is a framework for a planned literature program.

Four major concentrations can form the framework for a literature program: Children's Interests, Literary Types, Literary Elements, and Creators of Children's Literature. The order in which each is taught will depend on the teacher and the children. Plans for a year would alternate topics with some blocks of time being as short as one or two weeks while others would cover as much time as four weeks. The general topics can be used for any age level in the elementary school but for some age levels, topics would merit a major emphasis and for others only a minor emphasis would be appropriate. Obviously, each of the topics relates to the other three topics so that a lattice design emerges over the time of a year.

Children's interests can provide excellent motivation for reading and for serious study of literature. The teacher will use surveys of interest and observe changes in children's interests as a result of teaching. Information about children's interest should be the beginning of teaching for it is the adult who can see the relationships between a child's expressed interest and the wide range of possibilities which the child has not explored. In working with children's interests, the teacher can encourage each child to become an

expert in some area of literature, a characteristic of the person who reads but a goal often ignored, if not discouraged, in the elementary school.

Bibliographies can be constructed to satisfy major areas of children's interests. Humor or funny books, Dragons and Monsters, Sports, Mysteries, Animals, and Science Fiction are choices both research and practice report children say they like to read about. Sessions can be planned when each child reads all that can be found in a specific area of interest and be prepared to try to convince others that the interest is at least worth trying if not developing further. Record keeping can be devised which is simple but accurate and completely individual. The oral reading done by the teacher can, at times, be related to developing goals in an interest concentration. Schemes for silent reading of a book of the student's choice, many of them with acronyms, such as USSR, have some of the characteristics of the program structured around children's interests, but they lack the teacher guidance which is recommended in a planned literature program.

Books from the library which are on the topic of interest will be selected by the teacher with help from the library personnel and student selection committees. The collection of books for teaching, at least four times as many books as there are students in the class, should be easily accessible. The teacher can use the situation for teaching about selecting a book that is worth reading and will be read.

A study of literary types as a major concentration in a planned literature program would include a study of myth and legend, folk tale, contemporary and historical realistic fiction, fantasy, science fiction, poetry, biographical fiction, and non fiction. Each teacher or committee of teachers

may use different groupings but complete coverage should be achieved without assuming that there are absolute discrete divisions between types of literature. The major efforts of the teacher during the entire elementary school literature curriculum are directed toward providing children an opportunity to hear and to read different types of literature. Terminology will be used only after students have rich background from which to make comparisons and to draw conclusions about characteristics of different types of literature. Observation, appreciation, and study of pictures as well as text will be part of the teaching-learning process at each age level. The teacher will select books which are excellent examples of the finest literature but which also will appeal to the interests of the children. Multiple copies, paperback editions, of selected titles appropriate to the age and specific teaching goals are recommended along with a wide range and variety of books from the library. The teaching collection can include books which cover a range of reading difficulty so that reading achievement will not limit participation in reading and discussing books whatever the genre. Using this approach, poetry will be taught for listening and reading values; non-fiction will be introduced as a kind of book which is worth reading for enjoyment and information, not just the kind of book to be used when making a report in another subject. In a study of biographical fiction, a teacher can teach children to become discriminating and critical readers. Work with other types of literature will also build powers of judgment so that arguments of those who wish to censor materials for children will lose validity.

Literary elements can be studied in much the same way the teacher and students work with literary types with focus on exposure, through reading and

listening, to the elements which are a part of the composition of story or poem or play. Children can learn to examine their responses to literature and begin to perceive what it is in the work which causes them to respond in that particular way. Characterization, both portrayal of character and development of character, can be studied. In study of the language of literature, attention will be drawn to structure of the language used and to the effect of figurative language. Plans for teaching literary elements will include attention to voice, sincerity in style, believability of style, and vividness of description. Awareness and understanding of plot structure will begin early if good examples are provided by the teacher but growth in perception will be gradual. In many programs for teaching literature study of theme of story is a prominent component, often a major unit or teaching segment. Study of themes has often been included in work with literary elements but the risk of being didactic by imposing responses upon children is great, too great to recommend especially when the goals of a literature program can be achieved without it. Bibliography for study of literary elements can be constructed in much the same way that was recommended for the other teaching concentrations. Multiple copies of some titles will facilitate variety in method. The most effective list of books will be those the teacher has read and knows will satisfy the goals of teaching but if the teacher does need sources of information about books for teaching literary elements, there are many excellent references to which the teacher can refer.

The fourth concentration for teaching literature is creators of books. The contributions of author and illustrator will be the major part of the planned work in this concentration but children can also learn about translators,

collectors, adapters, and editors. Contemporary authors may be more immediately interesting to both teacher and student but the teacher will be responsible for historical perspective and introduce children to writers and authors from earlier time periods as well as to those who are living today. Similarities and contrasts in art styles and in writing styles can be used to group writers and artists. The interrelationships among the four major concentrations are especially strong in the study of creators of books because, in most cases, the book should be read or heard before the creator is recognized. Books are the resource most important to study of authors and illustrators but film materials can extend and supplement appreciation and knowledge about the persons who write and draw for children. Evaluating instruction in this phase of teaching can be done through observation of the books children select to read and the understanding they demonstrate when discussing works from a variety of creative artists and authors.

Recommendations which are similar to those found in the preceding outline can be found in textbooks, teacher guides, and even in findings and recommendations resulting from research. Recognizing the critical role which the teacher assumes in many recommended approaches, the teacher would be the person to design, plan, and implement a program much the way many of the texts about teaching literature recommend that the teacher do. In an elementary school staff with active curriculum leadership, it is reasonable to expect that planning for literature is school-wide and not left to chance to be done only by the teachers with the conviction that it is an important part of curriculum planning.

Recommendations for Research

Current practices in teaching literature in the elementary school are not precisely defined nor are they supported by extensive research findings. There is an extensive body of resource material about the subject of children's literature but considerably less material is available which deals with curriculum organization. Foremost among the issues toward which research might be directed is the description of current curriculum practices in teaching literature. Questions could be asked which relate to the amount of instructional time spent teaching literature. Studies of the effect of integration of the language arts on attitude toward literature and on extent of personal reading could give direction to curriculum planning if the studies included measures or descriptions of success of the literature programs.

Curriculum guides giving direction to teaching literature vary from state-wide guides to guides developed for one school system. Increased attention should be given to the effectiveness of curriculum guides and to the composition of the groups who design the guides. The literature program is frequently a part of the reading curriculum, and reading specialists often are oriented toward clinical, diagnostic, and remedial teaching practices. Will the literature program receive balanced attention if a clinical approach to reading influences the reading program? When literature is used with many curriculum areas, assessment should be made to describe the effects of the combinations on literature and on the subject with which it is being combined. In the search for balances, there should be both literature as literature and literature as it enhances and enriches other studies.

A large up-to-date collection of children's books, combined with certain selected books with duplicate copies, are essential for teaching literature. There should be no conflict between that fact and the goal of resource centers to select and circulate books which enrich the entire curriculum in the elementary school. It is necessary, however, that the literature point of view be represented in the book selection process. Assessments should be made about the impact of curriculum topics on policy for selection of resource materials. Does content, rather than literary quality and children's interests, influence selection of books? Censorship has become a genuine concern in the book selection processes in the elementary school. What are effective ways for encouraging cooperation between teachers and personnel in library resource centers on issues about children's freedom to read?

Teaching practices have been studied, but the variables are difficult to control and results are often inconclusive. The results of teaching literature appear to be difficult to test in an objective manner because the goals for teaching literature do not lend themselves to objective measurement. Research should focus on ways to communicate the accomplishment of an individual who is a student in a class where there is a literature program in action. Rather than being limited to the test-scores approach of some curriculum areas, researchers should strive to demonstrate that there are ways to describe growth in understanding and appreciating literature. Longitudinal studies are rare in any phase of education and there are none in literature where the goals often refer to establishing life-long habits of reading. Research should attempt to identify the factors which contribute to an individual's becoming a person who reads.

The preparation of the teacher for teaching literature is another area with little evidence on which to base practice. Countless theoretical and philosophical statements proclaim that it is the teacher who makes the difference but there is little more on which to base either pre-service or in-service teacher preparation. It is considered important for the teacher to know children, to know children's books, and to read and to know literature. No evidence indicates whether the three areas of knowledge are inseparable, are acquired in a specific order, or whether they are innate or acquired. The assumption that teacher preparation makes the difference should be tested. In-service programs in children's literature occur less frequently than in-service programs in other curriculum areas. Efforts could be made to include literature as an in-service topic, and studies could be made of the effectiveness of the in-service program as it is reflected in the teaching of literature with children.

Professional organizations in reading, language arts, and general elementary education have given increased attention to topics related to teaching literature in their local, state, and national meetings. Professional publications offer extensive and varied coverage of the field of children's literature. Follow-up studies of the impact of meetings and articles could give clues about ways in which practices in teaching literature can be influenced.

Adults are actively engaged in work in the field of children's literature. The persons who create and publish the rich resource of books which appeal to children express their concern through the quality of the product which is available for children and their teachers. The personnel responsible for libraries, resource centers, or other collections of materials are concerned

about selecting, presenting, and circulating materials which are the core of a literature program. Instructional materials for children and for teachers organize content of children's literature and suggest methods for encouraging children to read books. Researchers select segments of content or practice and proceed in a scholarly way to provide evidence for implementation of practices in teaching literature to children. In each of many special areas, expertise exists which is essential to carrying out tasks but it is possible that children and the teaching of literature to children assume less than central focus when viewed by all the professional who call children's literature their business. Research should be able to help discover where the children are in the process of teaching literature in the elementary school.

The major issues in teaching literature in the elementary school relate to children and their appreciation for reading. Do children read? Can they select what they want to read? Can they judge what is worth reading? Are children beginning to understand why they respond the way they do to the material they read? Teachers will continue to seek approaches to literature which will encourage children to read. Answers to questions about teaching literature to children might best be found if the focus for research is placed on the reading children do and on the responses children make to the literature they read.

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